GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ATOMIC ENERGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:23
ANSWERED ON:22.07.2015
Nuclear Safety
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Will the Minister of ATOMIC ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is satisfied with the regulatory mechanism in place for ensuring nuclear safety in India and if so, the details thereof;

(b) whether the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has requested for functional independence as a regulator;

(c)if so, the details thereof and the response of the Government thereto; and

(d)the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES & PENSIONS AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (Dr. JITENDRA SINGH) :

(a) Yes, Sir. Our national nuclear regulator - Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) has well established policies governing regulation of nuclear and radiation safety and has all the necessary functional autonomy for conducting the safety reviews and regulatory control of the nuclear and radiation facilities in India. AERB has been effectively fulfilling its mandate of safety review and regulation concerning nuclear safety with various nuclear facilities in India. In pursuance of such policies, AERB has issued Safety Codes, Safety Standards and Safety Guides for regulation of nuclear and radiation facilities/activities in India. AERB has evolved a robust process for safety review and issue of consents at various stages viz. siting, construction, commissioning, operation and decommissioning for setting up of nuclear and radiation facilities, in addition to the periodical regulatory inspections. AERB follows its strategy of comprehensive review in a multi-tier regulatory structure of safety committees (involving experts in relevant fields from various organisations) before issue of consent based on requirements specified in AERB Safety Code on "Regulation of Nuclear and Radiation Facilities" and associated Safety Guides. AERB"s functional autonomy and robust policies in regulating nuclear and radiation safety are also evident from the very good safety performance of the nuclear facilities which is on par with the international benchmarks.

(b) (c) & (d) No Sir, AERB is already having a robust nuclear safety mechanism that has been functionally independent. However, in order to give statutory strength to AERB, Government had introduced the Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority (NSRA) Bill, 2011 in the Lok Sabha on 7 September 2011. By enacting NSRA Act, the functional independence of AERB will be converted into de jure independence. The Bill could not be taken up for consideration due to dissolution of 15th Lok Sabha. With the formation of the 16th Lok Sabha, the Bill is proposed to be introduced afresh. Accordingly, a Bill titled Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority Bill, 2015 is proposed to be introduced in Parliament after completion of necessary pre-legislative formalities

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